(a) whether there is any proposal to privatise the Lal Bahadur Shastri Nautical and Engineering College, Bombay;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Cargo Facilities for Exports from Bangalore

5975. SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of requests have been made by the Government of Karnataka to the Union Government to provide adequate cargo facilities for exporting fruits, vegetables and flowers from Bangalore to Arab countries and East European countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). The Ministry of Commerce has not received any proposal from the Government of Karnataka for providing cargo facilities for export of fruits, vegetables and flowers at Bangalore.

However, suitable facilities could be provided at the Bangalore Air Cargo Complex, which is run by the Government of Karnataka, for export of perishables.

Cardamom Crop Disease

5976. SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether cardamom crop in Sikkim which plays an important role in foreign exchange earnings and economic well being of the people, has been suffering due to various diseases which is bringing down its production; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Spices Board has taken necessary measures for disease management. These include:-

1. Extension Advisory Scheme, to educate growers on scientific pest and disease management;

2. Cardamom replanting scheme to educate farmers of replantation of diseased and old plants;

3. Maintaining demonstration plots to popularise scientific pest and disease management and cultural operation;

4. Supply of plant protection equipments,, like sprayers and dusters, to farmers at 75% subsidy; and

5. Helping the farmers to construct "during houses" to improve the quality of the produce.

Opening of Bank Branches

5977. SHRI CHETAN P.S. CHAUHAN:
SHRIMATI DIPIKA H.